

REMARKS

Applicants request favorable reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 40-43 are presented for consideration. Claim 40 is the sole independent claim. Claims 40, 42 and 43 have been amended to clarify features of the subject invention. Support for these changes can be found in the original application, as filed. Therefore, no new matter has been added.

Applicants request favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection and rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action.

Claim 42 was objected to due to a minor informality. Claim 42 has been amended in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion. Applicants submit that this change to claim 42 overcomes this objection. Such favorable indication is requested.

Claims 40-43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The Examiner objected to the recitation regarding the monitor line in claim 40 at lines 11-12. To expedite prosecution, Applicants have clarified this feature of the invention. The Examiner's comments were taken into consideration when amending claim 40. Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, in view of these changes.

Turning now to the art rejection, claims 40-43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 3,398,620 to Gautron. Applicants submit that this patent does not teach many features of the present invention as previously recited in claims 40-

43. Therefore, this rejection is respectfully traversed. Nevertheless, Applicants submit that claims 40-43, as presented, amplify the distinctions between the present invention and the cited art.

Independent claim 40 recites a method of cutting an insulating substrate on which two-dimensionally arranged thin film semiconductor elements are installed. The method includes steps of cutting at least a slice line provided on the insulating substrate while detecting a misalignment of a cutting position from the slice line and correcting the cutting position, cutting the insulating substrate on a side opposing the slice line without correcting a cutting position on the side the opposing the slice line, and electrically confirming, after the cutting step is completed, whether a monitor line, provided on a side where the thin film semiconductor elements are installed, is open.

Applicants submit that the cited art does not teach or suggest such features of the present invention, as recited in independent claim 40.

In Applicants' view, the Gautron patent discloses a sheet material cutting apparatus that has pivotally mounted shears for cutting the sheet material and a unit to move the sheet material relative to the shears. The sheet material is loosely guided with respect to the shears and a unit is provided that is responsive to angular variations of the sheet material to adjust the angle of the shears.

According to the present invention, as recited in independent claim 40, the side of an insulating substrate opposing a slice line is cut without correcting the cutting position of the side opposing the slice line. After the cutting step is completed, a step is performed of electrically

confirming whether a monitor line, provided on the side where the thin film semiconductor elements are installed, is open.

Applicants submit that the Gautron patent does not teach or suggest such features of the present invention as recited in independent claim 40.

The Gautron patent is directed to cutting out material in steel sheets by shearing (column 1, lines 24-25), and provides an electrically-conductive wiring guide 13 for the cutting of a steel sheet (column 4, lines 8-11). That patent at column 4, lines 45-71, with respect to Figures 1 and 2, discusses that the guide wire 13 is suspended between electrodes 15 and 16. If the electrode 15 contacts the guide wire 13 during the cutting, the shearing direction is changed in one direction and if the electrode 16 contacts the guide wire 13 during the cutting, the shearing direction is changed in the opposite direction. Applicants submit that the Gautron patent does not teach or suggest electrically confirming (after a cutting step is completed) whether a monitor line, provided on a side where thin film semiconductor elements are installed, is open.

Further, as shown in Figure 2 of the Gautron patent, the guide wire 13 is located between the left side of the steel sheet T and the cut D so that the guide wire 13 could not possibly be cut during the shearing operation. Accordingly, in that patent, there is no need to electrically confirm (after a cutting step is completed) whether a monitor line is open, since the guide wire 13 is always conductive after cutting.

Additionally, the Gautron patent only discloses the use of the electrically conductive guide wire 13 on a conductive steel sheet. As a result, an electrical test of the guide wire 13 could not be performed after cutting since its connections to the conductive steel sheet would

mask any results. In at least the foregoing respects, Applicants submit that the guide wire 13 in the Gautron patent would not teach or suggest the features of the present invention of cutting an insulating substrate on which two-dimensionally arranged thin film elements are installed combined with the feature of electrically confirming, after the cutting step is completed, whether a monitor line, provided on a side where the thin film semiconductor elements are installed, is open.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that the Gautron patent does not teach or suggest the salient features of Applicants' present invention as recited in independent claim 40.

Applicants further submit that the remaining art cited does not cure the deficiencies noted above with respect to the Gautron patent. Therefore, that art adds nothing to the teachings of the Gautron patent that would render obvious Applicant's present invention as recited in independent claim 40.

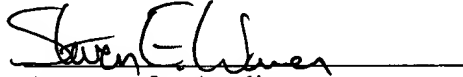
For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the present invention, as recited in independent claim 40, is patentably defined over the cited art.

Dependent claims 41-43 also should be deemed allowable, in their own right, for defining other patentable features of the present invention in addition to those recited in independent claim 40. Further individual consideration of these dependent claims is requested.

Applicants further submit that the instant application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the objection and rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven E. Warner", is written over a horizontal line.

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